

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4-8, 14 and 15 are amended.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Nguyen at the personal interview held May 22 and during the September 15 and 16 telephone conferences are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

Applicants appreciate the Office Action indication that claims 3-13 recite patentable subject matter. However, in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

The Office Action objects to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the subject matter recited in claim 14. By this Amendment, the specification is amended to obviate this grounds of objection.

The Office Action objects to claims 5 and 8 for informalities. By this Amendment, claims 5 and 8 are amended to obviate this grounds of objection.

The Office Action rejects claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, the specification is amended to explicitly state which structures correspond to the cited means in claim 14. By this Amendment, the rejection of claim 14 is obviated.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Sicard (U.S. Patent 4,928,053). However, as agreed to during the September 16 telephone interview, the circuit disclosed in Sicard only operates when $V_s > V_{bat}$ as disclosed in col. 3, lines 55-57. Therefore, Sicard does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 1, 14 and 15, as amended, "when said switch unit is switched on, a second power supply voltage is supplied from said drive control circuit to said control signal supply circuit...wherein said second power supply voltage is less than said third power supply voltage."

Claim 2 depends from claim 1, and is patentable for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1, as well as for the additional features it recites. Therefore, as agreed to during the telephone interview, Applicants respectfully request the rejections of claims 1, 2, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-15 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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